

Gift of the Future Giving Circle Grant Proposal

Habitat for Humanity of East Jefferson County
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Habitat for Humanity of East Jefferson County (HFHEJC) Mission

We build simple, decent houses in partnership with people in need. We are a Christian housing ministry partnering with people of all faiths or no faith to build lives on the foundation of homeownership and make shelter a matter of conscience and action.

Organizational Background

HFHEJC was founded in 1998 by a group of local community members interested in providing simple, decent, affordable housing to families in need. Our primary activity to date has been partnering with low income families living in substandard housing, to build or recycle houses for home ownership. In order to be eligible for Habitat services, a family must earn between 30 and 60 percent of the area median income, which is within the federal definition of Low Income.

During the last 12 years, HFHEJC has completed 20 homes and rehabilitated two, providing homes for 22 families with 47 children. We select families based on their need, ability to pay, and willingness to partner, including providing 400-500 hours of sweat equity. Habitat families pay a small down payment, attend homeownership classes, and pay an affordable, no-interest mortgage. Beginning in 2011, some Habitat families will purchase their houses with a low-interest (1-3%) mortgage through the USDA, allowing Habitat to build more houses.

In the 2009 calendar year, we completed three homes, housing four adults and seven children. In 2010, we have completed two homes, housing two single mothers and seven children. The 2011 calendar year will see the completion of at least four homes and the start of two additional houses.

Organizational Budget Size

HFHEJC's fiscal year begins July 1 and ends June 30.

Revenues for FY2010 were \$934,600 and expenses were \$1,038,700. This was the only operating deficit within the past three years.

In assessing this deficit, it is important to note the very large non-cash expenditure of \$304,600 in FY2010 due to the mortgage discount. Habitat holds non-interest bearing mortgages; generally accepted accounting principles in the U.S. require that interest be imputed on below-market interest instruments. The effect is to discount each note with an offsetting charge to other income/expense. (See Audit notes for further explanation.)

Project Design, Outcomes and Performance Standards

Project Name: **Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI)**
Contact Person: Jamie Maciejewski

Project Description

Project Purpose

With an aggressive goal to double the number of families served, Habitat applied last spring to become part of a national Habitat for Humanity pilot program called the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI). Our affiliate was selected in June as one of only 55 affiliates nationwide and Washington State's only rural affiliate to pilot this program. The Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative will:

- mobilize Habitat affiliates to deliver an unprecedented level of support and partnership with communities,
- enhance our long-term sustainability, and
- serve more families by responding to community needs with an expanded array of products, services and partnerships.

Habitat's board of director's has chosen to focus the NRI on the South County, and discussions are currently underway with residents and organizations in Quilcene to explore implementation there. Final board approval of the community is expected in December.

The Quilcene community is under stress due to foreclosures, home maintenance needs, and the economic recession. By focusing on a South County community, HFHEJC is hoping to successfully implement the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative and, in turn, serve more families.

The NRI focuses a community's attention on the revitalization of the entire community, not just housing. Safe, decent, affordable housing is one component of a healthy community. Other components include economic stability, safety, infrastructure, recreational space, education, and social services. By gathering partners in an effort to revitalize the Quilcene community, Habitat can draw attention and focus to an underserved community.

Project Activities

To participate in the NRI project, HFHEJC is required to make a three-year commitment, to dedicate 50 percent of a staff person's time to the project, to expand housing products, to utilize a data tracking system, and to work in partnership with the local community.

During the first year, primary activities include developing partnerships and plans, using an asset mapping strategy to understand where current housing services fall short, and identifying the types of new housing services Habitat will take on in a specific community. (Examples of potential new housing services include rehabilitation, critical repair, weatherization, exterior remodels, and housing and foreclosure counseling.) The following two years will focus on implementing those new housing services in partnership with other organizations and groups. By the end of the three-year project, Habitat will make determinations regarding the future of the NRI within the affiliate; options include expansion of the NRI to other low-income communities in East Jefferson County.

Project Positioning

With an emphasis on ending poverty housing, Habitat for Humanity is uniquely positioned to implement the NRI. HFHEJC has the framework in place to involve community residents, to gather volunteers, to find qualified homeowners, and to leverage community support. Although revitalization of the entire community is the focus, Habitat will build on its strengths by focusing on housing needs of very low-income people, and utilizing homeownership, sweat equity, and no- or low-interest loans as key components of any activities we undertake.

We also have a dedicated Neighborhood Revitalization Consultant provided by HFHI, as well as a dedicated AmeriCorps VISTA member locally, to assist us in community development and housing service implementation. Lastly, Success Measures, a data system developed by NeighborWorks America, will be used to gauge the vitality of the community before and after implementation of the NRI.

Now is the time to implement NRI because housing need is growing, the recession is placing stress on local businesses, and the community is beginning to come together to address the lack of access to a gas station. Currently, seven of the approximate 20 Quilcene store fronts are vacant and the lack of commercial fire flow prevents renovation or construction of commercial buildings. As a result of a community gas station meeting, attended by 56 Quilcene residents, a group of concerned citizens are drafting a community development plan. This is a perfect opportunity to partner with this community to share best practices and provide support and encouragement to their efforts.

Qualifications of Project Leadership

Carla Caldwell, member of Habitat's board of directors and Executive Director of U.G.N., is the board member providing leadership to the effort. Her background in education and church leadership and organizational administration, together with her knowledge of the South County (her first teaching job out of college was in the Quilcene School District), are important qualifications for her participation in the project.

Cassandra Little (Seattle University, June 2010, Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communications and Public Affairs), Habitat's AmeriCorps VISTA member since August, focused her internship time in areas of family homelessness, community organizing, and communication consultancy. While a member of a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation journalism fellowship she researched the impacts of family and youth homelessness in the state and the service net. Her leadership and organizing abilities, together with her familiarity with the area (she is a native of Sequim), position her well for the work she is doing now to develop relationships and create partnerships with area residents and groups.

Logistics

NRI is a three-year commitment that began August 1, 2010 and will end July 1, 2013. The Giving Circle grant is requested for the 2011 calendar year.

The specific geographic area for this pilot project is the south part of East Jefferson County. We anticipate Habitat's board will elect to focus on Quilcene, WA, but this decision will not be finalized until December. According to the 2000 census, Quilcene is a rural village center with 248 households in the core area. Upon implementation and review of the NRI model, this project can be replicable in other low-income areas in Jefferson County, such as Port Hadlock, Irondale, Brinnon, and South Ludlow.

Budget Information

Our affiliate is seeking \$10,000 from the Gifting the Future Giving Circle in order to implement the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative and begin offering housing services in south Jefferson County.

NRI Capacity Building Budget

Expenditures		Revenues	
Staff compensation (0.1FTE Executive Director; 0.1 FTE Volunteer Coordinator; includes payroll taxes and benefits)	\$ 8,540	Giving Circle Grant	\$10,000
AmeriCorps VISTA costs (half-time position)	\$ 6,050	Additional Grant Support (request pending, Columbia Bank)	\$5,000
NRI National Conference (attendance by VISTA member)	\$ 1,500	Individual Contributions	\$5,000
Mileage reimbursement (weekly trip, 50 miles x \$.50)	\$ 1,300		
Supplies	\$ 1,060		
Success Measures System	\$ 1,050		
Survey incentives	\$ 500		
Total	\$ 20,000	Total	\$ 20,000

Expenses in the second and third year will include staff to operate the program and costs of providing housing services, e.g. renovations. The organization will be developing a funding plan for the staffing portion of the expenses, which will include increased fundraising from South County and additional grant support through the early stages. The housing services will be funded through repayment of no-interest Habitat loans and USDA Section 504 Repair Program funds for low-income homeowners.

Outcomes and Performance Standards

In September 2010, Habitat conducted a Quilcene community survey. Eighty-eight percent of surveyors said there is NOT enough safe, decent, affordable housing in Quilcene, and 80% said they know of families living in substandard housing.

Additional data paints a bigger picture of Quilcene needs. According to the Jefferson Healthcare report, 23 percent of Quilcene's children aged 5 to 17 years are living under the poverty line, and 50 percent of all children in the Quilcene School District receive free or reduced lunch. The Quilcene Community Center reported that 346 families used the food bank during the first week of November 2010; given that the total number of households in the rural village center of Quilcene is only 248, this demonstrates a bleak picture. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that half of all Quilcene homes were built prior to 1960. Visually, these homes are in need of extensive repair. The Boeing Bluebills estimate that one-third of the homes they build ramps on in Quilcene need more extensive repairs, such as a new roof or a new heating system.

The specific needs addressed by NRI activities include the following:

- Education about current housing services, such as OlyCAP's Weatherization Program
- Critical home repairs or rehabilitations
- Community coalition building to address unmet needs, such as a lack of a senior care center, day care, grocery store, and gas station

Desired Outcomes:

1. The state of housing in Quilcene is improved.
2. Local residents are engaged and empowered to formulate a community vision.

3. New volunteers are mobilized to work on NRI activities.
4. New funding resources become available to serve more families.

Certain NRI implementation steps will be taken in the next six months to support community development and to identify and meet housing needs.

These steps include:

Step	Tentative Completion
Community engagement activities	Ongoing
Holding a community stakeholder meeting	January 2011
Completing a resident survey	January 2011
Deciding on the geographic boundaries of the initial project location	January 2011
Conducting a community forum	February 2011
Surveying the block and parcel conditions within the boundary	February 2011
Partnering with other housing service organizations	March 2011
Deciding the appropriate housing services to offer	March 2011
Developing repair guidelines	April 2011
Deciding income qualifications	May 2011
Implementing the housing services	June 2011
Send Giving Circle progress report	November 2011
Send out second round of community surveys	January 2012
Re-evaluate NRI activities and update services	January 2012-13
Send Giving Circle final report	May 2012

Results of the community resident survey and the block and parcel survey will be shared with the Giving Circle.

Success will be measured through the difference between the community resident survey and the block and parcel surveys before and after NRI activities take place. The community resident survey includes questions about safety, goodwill of neighbors, community activities, community values, and assets. The block and parcel survey reveals the condition of the housing structures and the block as a whole, such as the state of the sidewalks and roads.

A structure of the various housing agencies partnering with the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative will be depicted in a document that can be shared with the Giving Circle and community agencies as a model for partnership.

As a result of the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, Quilcene residents will build a healthy, stable community and Habitat for Humanity of East Jefferson County will be a partner in addressing the need for safe, decent, affordable housing in south Jefferson County.